

Self-directed support

Personal budgets, individual budgets and direct payments

People who can get support from their council might have a personal budget or an individual budget. They can take the money in these budgets as a direct payment.

This fact sheet explains the difference between personal budgets, individual budgets and direct payments.



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contact In Control.
Tel: 01564 821 650
Email In Control
help@in-control.org.uk

Find more fact sheets at:
www.in-control.org.uk/factsheets



 This fact sheet was produced by In Control and Mencap as part of In Control and Me, a lottery funded project.
www.in-control.org.uk/icandme

The basic facts

Personal budgets

A personal budget is money for support that comes from social services – either adult social care or children’s services.

Individual budgets

An individual budget is money that comes from more than one place – social services and other funding sources. For example, if you have money from your social services department and the Independent Living Fund (ILF), this is an individual budget.

Direct payments

You can get the money paid in a number of different ways.

A direct payment is just one way: the council pays the money into your bank account and you organise it.

(There is another In Control fact sheet about money: My money – managing the money).

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More information

If someone needs support, their council should offer them self-directed support.

Self-directed support enables people to have as much control over their lives as they would like.

First, the council decides if you are eligible for support. People who are eligible are usually:

- disabled
- have mental health problems
- are becoming frail.

If you are eligible, you fill out a form and the council says how much money you can get.

They offer you a personal budget – money from social services – and check if you can get money from other places like the Independent Living Fund, Supporting People, Disabled Facilities Grant or Access to Work.

If you can get money from other places, the whole amount is called an individual budget.

Then you do a support plan that shows how you will spend the money to get the support and the life you want.

When the council agrees the plan, you get the money for your support. (There are other In Control fact sheets about support plans.)

There are different ways you can organise the money.

When you make your support plan, you decide how you want to manage your budget. There are six ways of managing the money.

You might have a direct payment: the local authority pays the money straight into your bank account – usually in monthly instalments. (You need a separate account to stop this money getting mixed up with any other money you have.)

But you don't have to organise the money yourself.

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You can arrange for someone else to manage it for you:

- someone you trust – a family member or friend
- a Trust (a legal group set up to act for you)
- someone you pay – a broker, an independent social worker or an advocate
- a service provider who manages the budget for you and provides support using an Individual Service Fund
- a care manager or social worker.

If a family member, circle of support or Trust fund manages the money for you, this is called an indirect payment. This works in much the same way as a direct payment.

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An example

Simon has had Multiple Sclerosis for the past five years. He has had support from the council for the last two years because his condition has got worse.

At a review, the council offered Simon a personal budget. In the past, home care workers came in to help him get up and shower. He went to a day centre three days a week. The rest of the time, he was at home with his wife and children.

Simon told his social worker that he liked his team of home care staff – they were really consistent. However, he was very bored with the day service. He thought he could do far more with his day, like attending a computer course.

A direct payment – but only for part of the budget

Simon decided that his social worker could manage some of his personal budget – the part that paid for home care support and two days of day service.

The money for the third day service day would come to Simon as a direct payment. He would use this money to employ his own personal assistant to help him go on a college course. Simon said that if he couldn't find a suitable personal assistant he could use an agency for support.

He also said that, if this worked well, he may want to take more hours as a direct payment and less day support or vice versa. The choice was his.

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There is a lot of information about self-directed support on In Control's website: www.in-control.org.uk

Here is a selection of things that tell you more:

Free to download or you can buy a copy from:

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or www.in-control.org.uk/shop:

How to be in control DVD or view on:
www.in-control.org.uk/dvd

For sale at:

In Control Support Centre, Carillon House, Chapel Lane, Wythall, B47 6JX or www.in-control.org.uk/shop:

The Essential Family Guide: how to help your family member be in control, Caroline Tomlinson

Keys to Citizenship: a guide to getting good support for people with learning disabilities, Simon Duffy

Useful website:

The government has a section about managing money on www.direct.gov.uk

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About the **In Control and Me** project

A three-year project to produce accessible information for everyone who wants to direct their own support, funded by the National Lottery through the BIG Lottery Fund. You can find out more at www.mencap.org.uk/incontrol or www.in-control.org.uk/icandme